



# Partnerships for Success (PFS): Underage Drinking and Prescription Drug Misuse Community Outcomes

## Case Example: Massachusetts

Scott Formica, Ph.D.

Social Science Research and Evaluation, Inc.

Massachusetts Statewide Evaluation Team

---

Presented at the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual National Prevention Network Meeting

Boston, MA

August 28, 2018

## Acknowledgements and Disclaimer

---

**Acknowledgements:** The following individuals have each made substantive contributions to the Partnerships for Success project in Massachusetts and the work that led to the development of this presentation:

- Tonya Fernandes – BSAS Prevention Program Coordinator
- Dragana Bolcic-Jankovic – UMass Center for Survey Research
- Fernando Perfas – BSAS Assistant Director of Prevention
- José Morales – BSAS Director of Prevention

**Disclaimer:** The views, opinions, and content expressed in this portion of the presentation are the views of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official position of SAMHSA or HHS.

# Overview: Massachusetts Partnerships for Success

---

## PFS-II grant

Sept. 30, 2012 – Sept. 29, 2015: (3 years)

N=8 sub-recipient communities

Rx drug misuse

High school age youth



## PFS 2015 grant

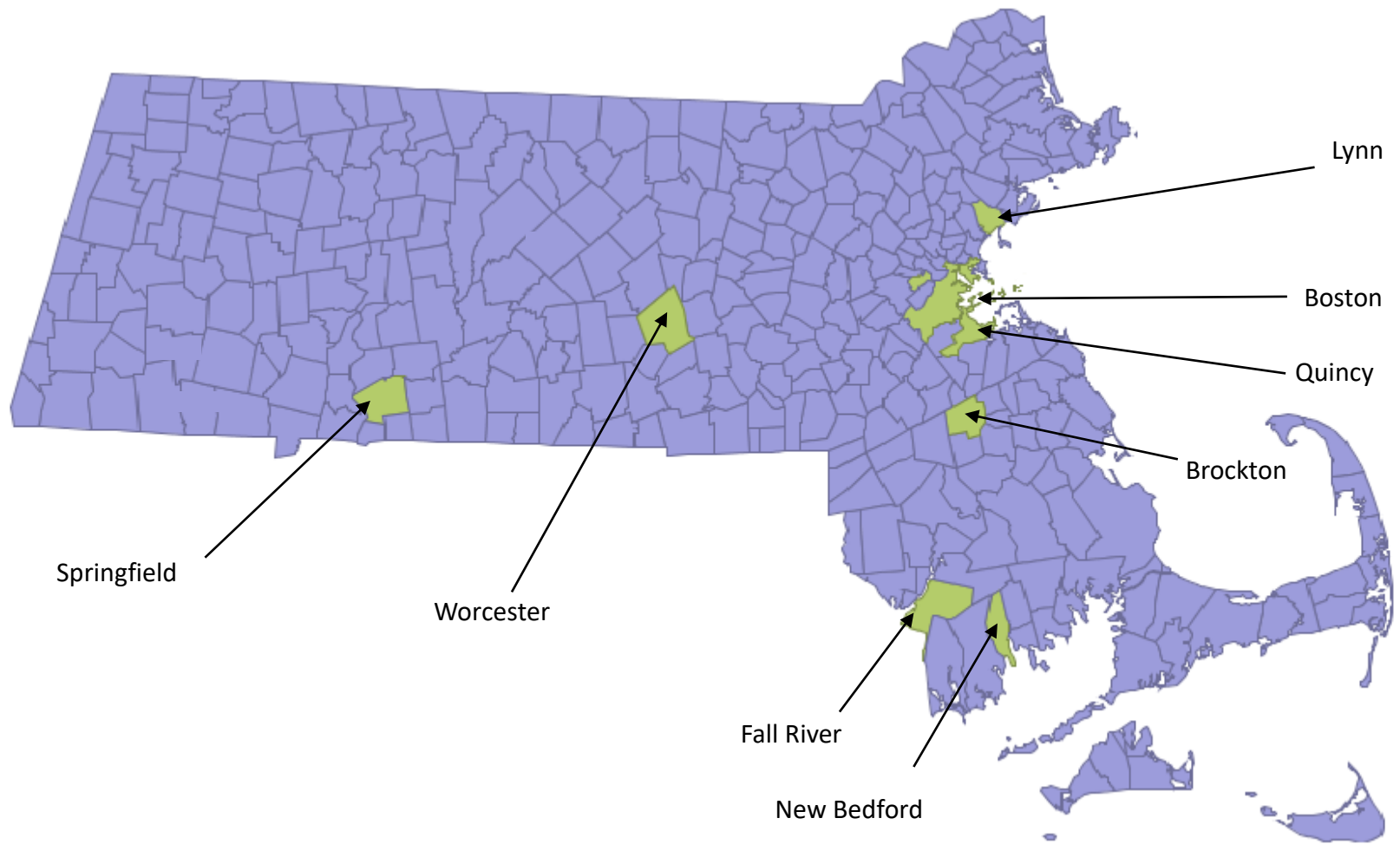
Sept. 30, 2015 – Sept. 29, 2020: (5 years)

N=16 sub-recipient communities

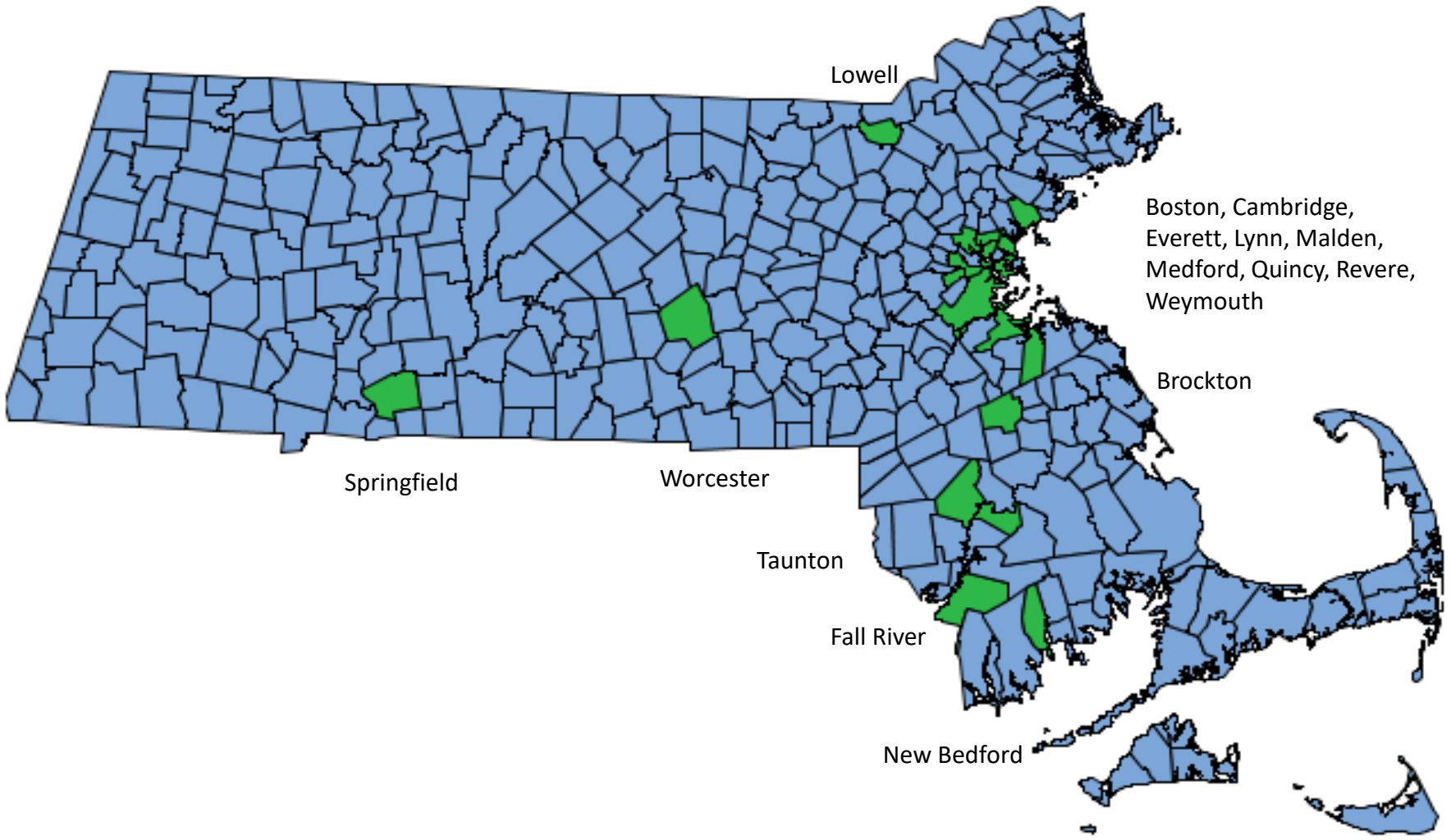
Rx drug misuse

High school age youth

# Massachusetts PFS-II Communities (n=8)



# Massachusetts PFS 2015 Communities (n=16)



# Intervening in Large, Densely Populated Communities

## Number of High School Youth

**Total Students:** 62,392    **Range:** 1,376 to 15,772  
**Average:** 3,900                      **Median:** 2,180

Municipality	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Total
Boston	4,189	3,553	4,024	4,006	15,772
Brockton	1,216	1,093	1,136	1,064	4,509
Cambridge	484	486	507	485	1,962
Everett	442	531	524	507	2,004
Fall River	651	576	526	511	2,264
Lowell	856	811	816	788	3,271
Lynn	1,209	1,182	1,024	1,003	4,418
Malden	472	429	455	454	1,810
Medford	335	321	358	362	1,376
New Bedford	562	613	548	372	2,095
Quincy	688	669	712	690	2,759
Revere	637	465	506	458	2,066
Springfield	2,117	1,842	1,572	1,490	7,021
Taunton	551	510	523	442	2,026
Weymouth	495	476	456	469	1,896
Worcester	1,841	1,854	1,726	1,722	7,143

## Community Outcome Data Gaps

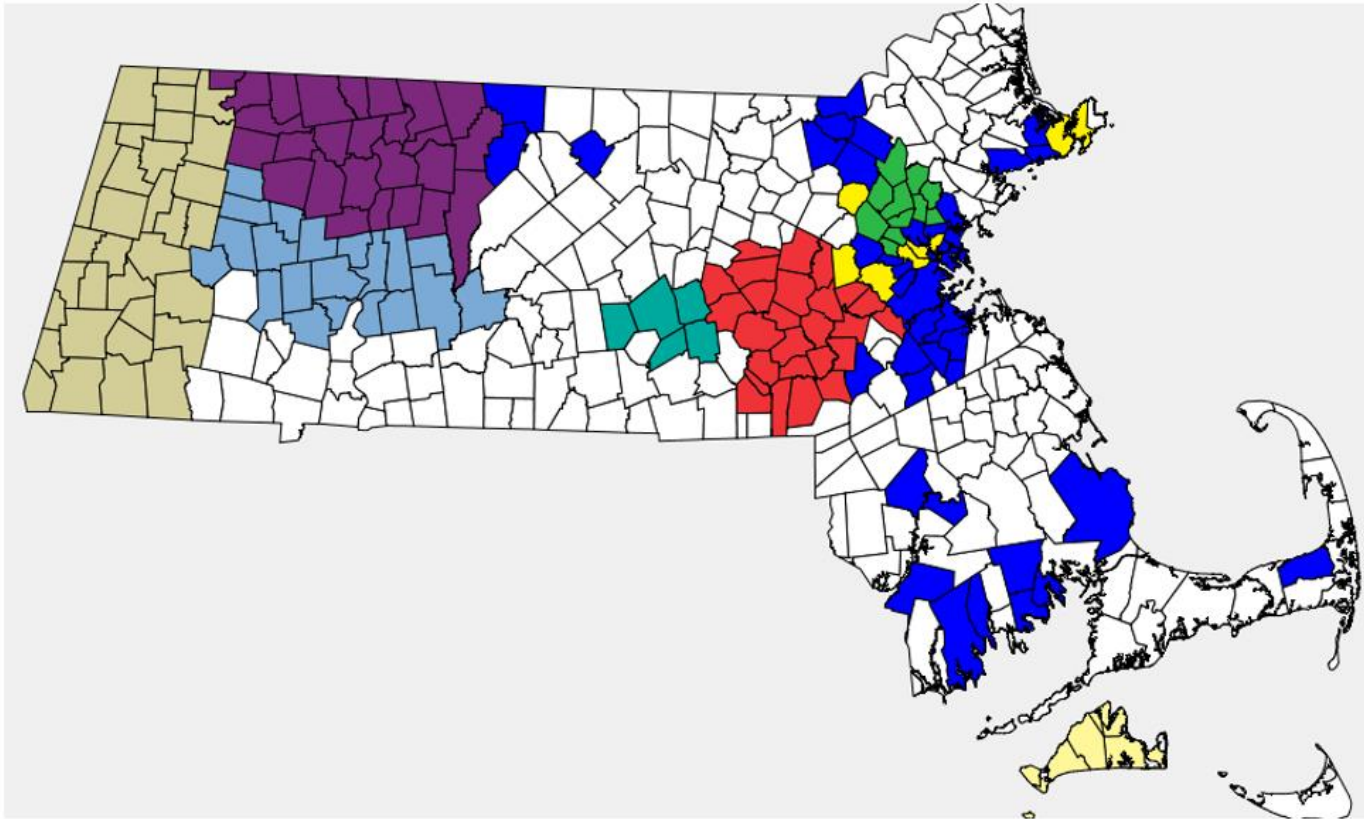
---

- MA has a rich tapestry of administrative data at the community level through DPH and DESE.
- Main data gap is for youth health survey data. The Commonwealth's youth surveillance instruments (YRBS, YHS) cannot be disaggregated to the community level.
- Many, but not all districts engage in some level of local assessment (e.g., local YRBS, CTC Survey, PNAS, etc.).
- Not all PFS subrecipients were able to meet the biannual data requirements for reporting consumption and intervening variable data on prescription drug misuse and underage alcohol use.

# MA Epi Workgroup Scan of Youth Surveys

## Estimate

Approximately 171 of 351 communities (49%) have a local student survey.





## State Support for PFS Communities

---

- Statewide evaluation team and MEW assessed each subrecipient's capacity to provide data (including instrument reviews). Similar to DFC model.
- Communities with existing instruments were encouraged to modify instruments, as needed, to align with PEP-C requirements.
- BSAS contracted with Center for Survey Research at UMass Boston:
  - Develop a Brief Community Survey (BCS) with MEW.
  - Assist schools to implement BCS with a sample or census (based on size)
  - Coordinate printing of survey, data scanning, data analysis, reporting.
- Offered to all sub-recipients as a way to either **meet** bi-annual requirement or as an “off-year” check-in for sites with an existing instrument.

# PFS Brief Community Survey

- Designed to be implemented in 15 minutes (homeroom period). Meets all core measure requirements with some additional variables.

### Community Health Survey

#### BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

1. How old are you?

11 years old or younger     15 years old  
 12 years old     16 years old  
 13 years old     17 years old  
 14 years old     18 years old or older

2. In what grade are you?

6<sup>th</sup> grade     10<sup>th</sup> grade  
 7<sup>th</sup> grade     11<sup>th</sup> grade  
 8<sup>th</sup> grade     12<sup>th</sup> grade  
 9<sup>th</sup> grade     Other/Ungraded

3. What is your sex?

Male  
 Female

4. Are you Hispanic or Latino?

Yes  
 No

5. What is your race?  
 (Select one or more responses)

American Indian or Alaska Native  
 Asian  
 Black or African American  
 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
 White

#### QUESTIONS ABOUT ALCOHOL & DRUGS

10. Do you think most people your age do the following?

	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
a. Drink alcohol	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Smoke marijuana	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Use other illegal drugs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Use prescription drugs that are not prescribed to them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The next 3 questions ask about drinking alcohol. This includes drinking beer, wine, wine coolers, hard lemonade, hard cider, and liquor such as rum, gin, vodka, or whiskey. For these questions, drinking alcohol does not include drinking a few sips of wine for religious purposes.

11. How old were you when you had your first drink of alcohol other than a few sips?

I have never had a drink of alcohol other than a few sips → If you have NEVER had alcohol, go to Question 14

10 years old or younger  
 11 or 12 years old  
 13 or 14 years old  
 15 or 16 years old  
 17 years old or older

12. During the past 30 days, on how many days did you have at least one drink of alcohol?

0 days  
 1 or 2 days  
 3 to 5 days  
 6 to 9 days  
 10 to 19 days  
 20 to 29 days  
 All 30 days

13. During the past 30 days, on how many days did you have 5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours?

0 days  
 1 day  
 2 days  
 3 to 5 days  
 6 to 9 days  
 10 to 19 days  
 20 or more days

14. Marijuana is also called grass, pot, weed or reefer. It includes blunts and cigars filled with marijuana. How old were you when you tried marijuana for the first time?

I have never tried marijuana → If you have NEVER tried marijuana, go to Question 16

10 years old or younger  
 11 or 12 years old  
 13 or 14 years old  
 15 or 16 years old  
 17 years old or older

#### QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW YOU FEEL

6. During the past 12 months, how many times did you hurt or injure yourself on purpose without wanting to die? (For example, by cutting, burning, or bruising yourself on purpose.)

0 times  
 1 time  
 2 or 3 times  
 4 or 5 times  
 6 or more times

7. During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?

Yes  
 No

8. During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?

Yes  
 No

9. During the past 12 months, did you actually attempt suicide?

Yes  
 No

15. In the past 30 days, have you used marijuana?

Yes  
 No

16. In your lifetime, have you used heroin (also called smack, junk, or China White)?

Yes  
 No → If NO, go to Question 18

17. In the past 30 days, have you used heroin (also called smack, junk, or China White)?

Yes  
 No

18. In your lifetime, have you ever taken any prescription pain reliever that wasn't your own or that you took only for the experience or feeling it caused (such as OxyContin, Percodan, Vicodin, Demerol, or Percocet)?

Yes  
 No → If NO, go to Question 20

19. In the past 30 days, have you ever taken any prescription pain reliever that wasn't your own or that you took only for the experience or feeling it caused (such as OxyContin, Percodan, Vicodin, Codeine, Morphine, Demerol, or Percocet)?

Yes  
 No

20. In your lifetime, have you ever taken any other type of prescription medicine that wasn't your own or that you took only for the experience or feeling it caused (such as Ritalin, Adderall, Valium, Xanax, or steroids)?

Yes  
 No → If NO, go to Question 22

21. In the past 30 days, have you ever taken any other type of prescription medicine that wasn't your own or that you took only for the experience or feeling it caused (such as Ritalin, Adderall, Valium, Xanax, or steroids)?

Yes  
 No

#### 22. PERCEPTIONS OF RISK

	No risk	Slight risk	Moderate risk	Great risk
a. How much do you think people risk harming themselves physically or in other ways when they have one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. How much do you think people risk harming themselves physically or in other ways when they have five or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage once or twice a week?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. How much do you think people risk harming themselves physically or in other ways when they use prescription drugs not prescribed to them?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### 23. PARENTS ATTITUDES

	Not at all wrong	A little bit wrong	Wrong	Very wrong
a. How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to have one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to have five or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage once or twice a week?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to use prescription drugs not prescribed to you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### 24. PEER ATTITUDES

	Not at all wrong	A little bit wrong	Wrong	Very wrong
a. How wrong do your friends feel it would be for you to have one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. How wrong do your friends feel it would be for you to have five or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage once or twice a week?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. How wrong do your friends feel it would be for you to use prescription drugs not prescribed to you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!**

SCANTRON Mark Health EM-294751-2464321 ED06

## Successes

---

- Between one-quarter and one-third of subrecipients have used the BCS in any given year of the grant.
- Nice example of collaboration between BSAS, MEW, statewide evaluation team, external data contractor, subrecipient program coordinator, and school district.
- [Seed Resource Model]: Some communities that had to use the BCS at the outset of the grant have since leveraged these data to convince local government and school administrators to provide support for a local survey.



## Challenge: Measurement

---

- Existing surveys often lacked items differentiating between different classes of prescription drugs (pain relievers, tranquilizers, stimulants, sedatives) and intervening variables of interest (e.g., usual source).
- Rx questions being crowded out in light of other issues (e.g., recreational marijuana legalization) and interest/attention to opioid overdose and fentanyl versus primary prevention.
- Lack of questions about group affiliation for populations and sub-populations the literature suggests are often at disproportionate levels of risk of use.



## Challenges: Administration

---

- Lack of data on vocational technical high schools, parochial schools, and alternative schools.
  - Particularly relevant in light of the recently released **Opioid-related Overdose Deaths in Massachusetts by Industry and Occupation** report issued by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health that received national coverage.
- Push-back from some communities due to the sensitive nature of some of the questions in standard youth risk behavior survey questionnaires (e.g., suicidality, sexual behavior).
- Inconsistent administration (e.g., “We weren’t able to survey 12<sup>th</sup> graders this year.”)
  - Really an issue of resources and sustainability.



## Challenges: Analysis

---

- Prevention coalitions that receive data reports from the school:
  - Often do not have access to raw data.
  - Are limited to the analyses provided (usually basic frequencies – maybe some limited cross-tabulations by gender, grade, race/ethnicity)
  - Even when the raw data are available, sites do not always have the knowledge or capacity to run sub-group analyses of interest.
- Makes targeted prevention programming difficult – too much reliance on qualitative data on convenience samples when quantitative data are available.

## Success: Alternative Data Sources

---

- Grantees have made extensive use of other assessment and community outcomes data sources:
  - Interviews and Focus Groups
  - Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Databases
  - Community surveys (online, health fairs, social media, public meetings)
  - Law enforcement data
  - Emergency department data
  - Town Clerk death certificate data
  - Prescription Drug Monitoring Program data
  - Rx Take-Back Event data
  - Special populations (older adults, public housing)

## Successes

---

“We reviewed the survey results from the UMASS Brief Community Survey. The survey included longitudinal findings and showed that [prescription drug misuse] decreased. However, there were some areas where peer attitudes related to substance use increased. In regards to prescription drugs, when asked "How wrong do your friends feel it would be for you to use prescription drugs not prescribed to you?", [older] students who responded "Not at all wrong“ increased. This data presented a possible opportunity to provide interventions for upperclassman.”

